

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

- (1) (Currently Amended) A hollow plastic bottle, which comprises:
- a hollow body of thermoplastic material having a generally cylindrical side wall, an upper end with a dispensing opening therein, and a lower supporting base with an inwardly extending portion;
- said side wall including a plurality of circumferentially spaced apart, vacuum panels and a plurality of elongated posts positioned between the panels;
- top and bottom elongated recessed cylindrical bands above and below said vacuum panels;
- and wherein said bottom elongated band extends continuously around the circumference of said bottle, and wherein said top elongated band includes at least two spaced apart discontinuities comprising raised portions each of which interrupts the continuity of the top band.
- (2) (Original) A bottle according to claim 1, wherein the top and bottom bands are each single bands.

- (3) (Currently Amended) A bottle according to claim 2, wherein said discontinuities are each positioned over the central portion of a an adjacent vacuum panel and the top band extends over the major portion of said adjacent vacuum panel.
- (4) (Original) A bottle according to claim 3, including two of said discontinuities spaced 180° apart.
- (5) (Original) A bottle according to claim 2, including a generally dome shaped portion located between the upper end and side wall.
- (6) (Original) A bottle according to claim 5, including six of said spaced apart vacuum panels.
- (7) (Original) A bottle according to claim 6, wherein said elongated posts comprise smooth, vertically elongated land areas which space apart each vacuum panel from each other.

(8) (Original) A bottle according to claim 1, wherein each vacuum panel includes an inwardly offset peripheral portion.

(9) (Original) A bottle according to claim 8, wherein said inwardly offset peripheral portion surrounds two central, outwardly extending vertical portions separated by a depressed portion.

(10) (Currently Amended) A bottle according to claim 9, wherein said inwardly offset peripheral portion has a curved ~~upper and lower regions~~ surface and wherein the depressed portion is located centrally on said vacuum panels.

(11) (Original) A bottle according to claim 2, including a label mounting area covering said vacuum panels and top and bottom recessed bands.

(12) (Currently Amended) A bottle according to claim 2, including an inwardly extending central portion of the base, a peripheral base rim to support the bottle when standing, and radially extending, outwardly disposed spokes extending between the central portion of the base and the peripheral rim.

(13) Canceled)

(14) (Original) A bottle according to claim 2, wherein the thermoplastic material is polyethylene terephthalate.

(15) (Original) A bottle according to claim 1, wherein said bottle is a hot fill container.

(16) (Original) A bottle according to claim 10, wherein said inwardly offset peripheral portion includes an outer perimeter and an inner perimeter, wherein the outer perimeter of said inwardly offset peripheral portion is depressed further than the inner perimeter.

(17) (New) A hollow plastic bottle, which comprises:

a hollow body of thermoplastic material having a generally cylindrical side wall, an upper end with a dispensing opening therein, and a lower supporting base with an inwardly extending portion;

said side wall including a plurality of circumferentially spaced apart, vacuum panels and a plurality of elongated posts positioned between the panels;

top and bottom recessed cylindrical bands above and below said vacuum panels;

and wherein said bottom band extends continuously around the circumference of said bottle, wherein said top band includes at least two spaced apart discontinuities comprising raised portions each of which interrupts the continuity of the top band, wherein the bottle includes a parting line and wherein the discontinuities are each 90° from the parting line.

(18) (New) A bottle according to claim 5, including a recessed portion between the dome shaped portion and the side wall.

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- (19) (New) A bottle according to claim 18, including a shoulder with a lower edge beneath the recessed portion.
- (20) (New) A bottle according to claim 19, wherein the lower edge of the shoulder defines an upper label bumper, and an upper edge of the base defines a lower label bumper.
- (21) (New) A bottle according to claim 15, wherein said bottle is a blow molded, plastic bottle.
- (22) (New) A bottle according to claim 1, wherein said vacuum panels are vertically elongated and disposed about the circumference of said side wall.
- (23) (New) A bottle according to claim 3, wherein said discontinuities are located entirely over the central portion of an adjacent vacuum panel.